

Introduces Own Legislation Directing Bush To Seek Authorization Before Strikes On Iran

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WASHINGTON, DC—Concerned about the mounting indications that President Bush is planning military action against Iran, Congressman DeFazio has introduced a resolution calling on the president to seek authorization from Congress prior to taking any such action. The resolution, H. Con. Res. 391, is supported by 26 other members of Congress.

There was also a vote in the House on Iran-related legislation today. The House considered legislation to extend economic sanctions against Iran on countries and companies investing in Iran. DeFazio voted in favor of these sanctions when they were originally proposed in 1996 and again when they were renewed in 2001. However, he voted against the sanctions bill today because, unlike the earlier versions, the new bill added provisions calling for U.S.-sponsored regime change in Iran.

While DeFazio supports targeted sanctions, he is opposed to establishing a U.S. policy of regime change by legislating American support of Iranian exile groups and groups within Iran seeking regime change.

“I voted against H.R. 282, the Iran sanctions bill, because I am concerned that it is the first step in taking our country down the same misguided path that was taken with Iraq,” Congressman DeFazio said. “I have voted in support of sanctions on Iran and those doing business with the country, and I continue to believe targeted sanctions are effective. However, I cannot support any bill that would establish a U.S. policy in favor of regime change in Iran.

“The Iranian exile groups that would likely benefit from the provisions in this bill eerily echo Ahmad Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress. Chalabi's INC worked with the Bush administration to mislead Congress and the American people about Iraq's supposed weapons of mass destruction in order to gain support for toppling Saddam Hussein using U.S. forces.”

DeFazio also introduced a resolution today, H. Con. Res. 391, directing the president to seek authorization from Congress prior to any military action.

"The last thing we need is another Iraq," Congressman DeFazio said. "My resolution reminds the president to follow federal law and Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, which requires authorization from Congress before taking military action against Iran. Members of the House of Representatives have been elected by their constituents to participate in major decisions like initiating military strikes against other countries, and it is an injustice to the American people to deny them that prerogative."